

June 2, 2023

Legislative Press Bureau at (401) 528-1743

## THIS WEEK AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE HOUSE — Here are the highlights from news and events that took place in the General Assembly this week. For more information on any of these items visit <http://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease>



- **Senate OKs Sen. Murray's tangible tax exemption bill**

The Senate approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Melissa A. Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) to exempt the first \$50,000 of tangible property from the tangible personal property tax to help businesses — especially small businesses — statewide. The bill ([2023-S 0928A](#)) now goes to the House, where Rep. Brandon T. Voas (D-Dist. 57, Cumberland, Central Falls) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2023-H 6333](#)).

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- **House OKs bill to encourage recruiting teachers from diverse backgrounds**

The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2023-H 5421](#)) introduced by Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) that would direct the Department of Education, in collaboration with the postsecondary education commissioner and the Board of Governors of the University of Rhode Island, to generate a written report of concrete proposals to attract persons from diverse and traditionally underrepresented backgrounds to teach in Rhode Island public schools. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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- **Senate passes Euer bill to ban unfair sales practices in automatic renewals**

The Senate passed a bill ([2023-S 0171A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) that would require vendors who use automatic renewals to send a reminder notice to consumers shortly before the date of the next charge outlining the amount due. The notice must also provide a clear, simple means of canceling the subscription. If the company allowed consumers to sign up electronically, they must

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provide a simple cancellation link. The measure now moves to the House for consideration.

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- **House OKs bill for guide of landlords and tenants' rights, responsibilities**

The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2023-H 5204A](#)) introduced by Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Dist. 11, Providence) that would direct the Secretary of Housing to create a consumer guide that outlines those rights and responsibilities as they are enumerated in the law. The guide, which would be updated biennially, would be published in English and Spanish, both in print and on the Department of Housing website. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2023-S 0305](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Ana B. Quezada (D-Dist. 2, Providence).

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- **Senate approves President Ruggerio's bill to address lead pipes**

The Senate approved the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act ([2023-S 002A](#)) sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) to create a lead water supply pipe replacement program for both public and private service lines, with a requirement that all affected lines are replaced within 10 years. The bill goes to the House, where Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) has sponsored similar legislation ([2023-H 5007](#)).

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- **Ban on foam takeout containers, plastic stirrers clears Senate**

The Senate approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) to ban restaurants from using polystyrene foam for food packaging or preparation, or from providing plastic stirrers to customers. The legislation ([2023-S 0014A](#)) now moves to the House, where House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Chairman David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2023-H 5090](#)).

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- **Senate approves DiPalma's bill that protects employees after data breaches**

The Senate passed legislation ([2023-S 0425](#)) sponsored by Sen. Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) that would amend the Identity Theft Protection Act of 2015 by requiring municipal agencies, state agencies, or individuals to report data breaches of their personal information in a timelier manner. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. Terri Cortvriend (D-Dist. 72, Portsmouth, Middletown) has sponsored the legislation ([2023-H 5684](#)).

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- **Euer bill to protect contraceptive coverage passes Senate**

The Senate passed a bill ([2023 S-00526](#)), sponsored by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) that would ensure contraception remains covered by all health insurers in Rhode Island, even if the coverage requirements in the Affordable Care Act are overturned. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. Karen Alzate (D-Dist. 60, Pawtucket, Central Falls) has introduced similar legislation ([2023-H 5477](#)).

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- **Senate passes Ujifusa bill to protect patients' pharmacy options**

The Senate passed a bill ([2023-S 0870](#)) sponsored by Sen. Linda Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) that would prohibit insurers and pharmacy benefits managers from engaging in “white bagging.” White bagging refers to a practice where insurers require patients to get their prescriptions from insurer-affiliated pharmacies that are often mail order-only. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. Justine A. Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) has introduced similar legislation ([2023-H 5680](#)).

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- **Lawson bill to protect seniors from Medicare discrimination passes Senate**

The Senate passed a bill ([2023-S 0583Aaa](#)) sponsored by Sen. Valarie Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) that would protect seniors who wish to change their Medicare Advantage plan from being denied plan coverage or charged higher rates based on pre-existing conditions. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. Susan Donovan (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) has introduced similar legislation ([2023-H 6179](#)).

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